

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 PC-01 TRSE-00 EUR-12

CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

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R 150533Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2142

INFO AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 3847

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

SECDEF FOR ISA

FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, PFOR, EAID, WS

SUBJ: AMBASSADOR'S CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER OF WESTERN
SAMOA

SUMMARY: DURING SEMI-ANNUAL VISIT TO WESTERN SAMOA FROM WHICH
I HAVE JUST RETURNED, I INVITED DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY
EDMOND TO JOIN ME IN MY CALL ON TUPUOLA EFI, PRIME MINISTER
OF WESTERN SAMOA. EDMOND HAD ALREADY TALKED WITH EFI THE DAY
BEFORE. IN COURSE OF FRANK CONVERSATION DURING MY VISIT, EFI
ADVISED THAT: EIGHT PRC PERSONNEL ARE ARRIVING APIA NEXT WEEK
TO OPEN PRC MISSION; HE EXPECTS SOVIETS TO FOLLOW WITH MISSION,
BOTH CHINESE AND SOVIETS HAVE MADE CONCRETE OFFERS OF BILATERAL
AID; WESTERN SAMOA WOULD PREFER TO WORK WITH TRADITIONAL PARTNERS
IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUT SAMOA'S NEED FOR HELP, PARTICULARLY
IN TRANSPORTATION, IS CRITICAL. IN REPLY, I STRESSED USG'S
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MAJOR AND LONG-STANDING INTEREST IN WESTERN SAMOA'S DEVELOPMENT,

NOTING IMPORTANT ROLE OF PEACE CORPS; AGREED (WITH DEPUTY SECRETARY EDMOND) TO TRY TO QUICKLY ARRANGE FOR MIDDLE LEVEL AID SPECIALIST TO VISIT SAMOA; AGREED TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF TRANSFERRING TO WESTERN SAMOA SMALL, USED CARGO VESSEL OF TYPE BEING USED IN TTPI; AND AGREED TO INVESTIGATE WAY USG SURPLUS EQUIPMENT IN PAGO PAGO MIGHT BE MADE AVAILABLE TO WESTERN SAMOA. END SUMMARY.

1. ON OCTOBER 9, DURING MY SEMI-ANNUAL TOUR OF PACIFIC ISLANDS TO WHICH I AM ACCREDITED, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LESTER EDMOND JOINED ME IN MY CALL ON WESTERN SAMOAN PRIME MINISTER TUPUOLA EFI. IULAI TOMA, SECRETARY TO GOWS AND JOHN CLARK, EMBASSY WELLINGTON ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, ALSO WERE PRESENT DURING CANDID DISCUSSION OF WESTERN SAMOA'S ECONOMIC/POLITICAL SITUATION.

2. EFI OFFERED THAT SOVIETS AND CHINESE MAY SEE PRESENT AS TIME OF CHANGE IN SOUTH PACIFIC. THERE ARE NUMBER OF ISLANDS (E.G. TONGA, COOKS) WHERE POLITICAL STRUCTURE IS CENTERED AROUND SINGLE INDIVIDUAL. DESPITE THE APPEARANCE OF STABILITY, THESE SYSTEMS COULD BE FRAGILE IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO INDIVIDUAL. HE CONTRASTED STRAINED RELATIONS WITH NEW ZEALAND AND FAILURE OF USG TO COME FORWARD WITH BILATERAL AID WITH GREAT INTEREST OF CHINESE AND SOVIETS IN THE AREA. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN INVITED TO VISIT USSR AND CHINESE HAVE ASKED TO ESTABLISH TEN MAN MISSION IN APIA -- FIRST EIGHT MEN TO ARRIVE THIS NEXT WEEK. BOTH CHINESE AND SOVIETS HAVE OFFERED BILATERAL AID AND SOVIETS HAVE ALSO INDICATED THEIR INTEREST IN ESTABLISHING A MISSION. EFI EXPRESSED BEWILDERMENT THAT USG COULD NOT BE MORE HELPFUL.

3. I EXPLAINED TO EFI THAT THE DIFFERENCE WAS THAT USG INTEREST WAS NOT RPT. NOT NEW. WHILE THERE WERE PRACTICAL LIMITS TO USG UNDERTAKINGS IN CAPITAL PROJECTS, OUR ASSISTANCE TO WESTERN SAMOA HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIAL FOR A LONG TIME. USG IS MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO MULTILATERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS WHICH BENEFIT WESTERN SAMOA AND THE PEACE CORPS HAS HAD A SUBSTANTIAL PROGRAM IN HIS COUNTRY FOR SEVERAL YEARS. ON THE LATTER SCORE, I EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE GOWS MIGHT NOT CONSIDER THE PEACE CORPS TO BE REALLY USEFUL. I CITED AN EDITORIAL OF THE PREVIOUS DAY -- FROM A NEWS-PAPER REPUTEDLY WITH CLOSE COWS TIES -- WHICH DISMISSED THE PEACE CORPS AS "CHEAP WAY TO SPREAD AMERICAN INFLUENCE".
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EFI INSISTED THIS WAS NOT HIS VIEW OR THAT OF HIS GOVERNMENT. PEACE CORPS WAS GENERALLY VERY GOOD PROGRAM HE SAID, BUT TIME MIGHT BE PROPITIOUS TO EXAMINE WHETHER ITS EMPHASIS IN WESTERN SAMOA WAS RIGHT. I TOLD EFI THAT ORIENTATION OF PEACE CORPS PROGRAM WAS THE SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION WITH WASHINGTON AT PRESENT TIME AND THAT THE PM SHOULD SATISFY HIMSELF AS TO THE CORRECT PROGRAM MIX FOR HIS COUNTRY. THE PEACE CORPS COUNTRY DIRECTOR WOULD BE HAPPY TO WORK WITH THE GOWS ON THIS. EFI

AGREED WITH ME ON THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKING AVAILABLE ADEQUATE PUBLIC INFORMATION ON U.S. PROGRAMS.

4. ON THE MATTER OF RESIDENT USG REPRESENTATION IN APIA, I TOLD EFI THAT THE RECENT DESIGNATION OF A CONSULAR AGENCY WAS A MAJOR STEP TAKEN IN THE INTEREST OF IMPROVED COMMUNICATION AND CONSULAR SERVICES. WHILE IT MIGHT CONCEIVABLY BE FOLLOWED AT SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE BY PLACEMENT OF A CAREER CONSULAR OFFICER IN APIA, I WAS SURE THIS FURTHER STEP WAS SOME TIME AWAY. THE PRIME MINISTER RESPONDED THAT A RESIDENT AMERICAN OFFICER WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL AND IDEALLY HE WOULD HOPE THE USG COULD ESTABLISH A MISSION COMPARABLE TO THAT OF THE SOVIETS OR CHINESE. I NOTED THAT SIZES OF THE PRC AND SOVIET MISSIONS DESCRIBED BY THE PM WERE EXTRAORDINARILY LARGE AND TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK EFI IF HE KNEW WHAT ALL THOSE PEOPLE WOULD BE DOING. I SAID THE PRC HAD STARTED A MISSION OF ABOUT TEN IN FIJI AND IT HAD ALREADY INCREASED DRAMATICALLY TO EIGHTEEN. PM REMARKED THAT THERE WAS SOME CONCERN IN APIA ABOUT THE SOCIAL IMPACT SUCH A LARGE NUMBER OF SOVIETS AND CHINESE MIGHT HAVE ON THE COMMUNITY. I OPINED THAT THE CONCERN WAS WELL-FOUNDED AND THE TIME TO PLACE LIMITS ON THE SIZE OF FOREIGN MISSIONS WAS AT THE BEGINNING.

5. WITH REFERENCE TO THE PM'S INTEREST IN BILATERAL AID, I EXPLAINED THE USG'S LONG TERM TREND TOWARD MULTILATERAL PROGRAMS. IT WAS AGREED, HOWEVER, THAT DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY EDMOND WOULD TRY TO ARRANGE FOR MIDDLE LEVEL AID OFFICIAL TO VISIT WESTERN SAMOA TO LOOK AT AREAS OF FISHERIES, TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND FAMILY PLANNING. AID OFFICIAL WOULD ALSO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF MODEST PROGRAMS WHICH MIGHT BE HANDLED BY VOLUNTARY AGENCIES. HE ALSO AGREED TO LOOK INTO THE AVAILABILITY OF A USED, SMALL CARGO VESSEL OF THE TYPE BEING USED IN TTPI. I TOLD EFI THAT I WOULD WORK WITH GOVERNOR BARNETT AND EXAMINE THE

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POSSIBILITY OF TRANSFERRING SOME SURPLUS USG EQUIPMENT FROM PAGO PAGO TO WESTERN SAMOA. LASTLY, I EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE LETTER OF AGREEMENT ON TRAINING EQUIPMENT FOR POLYNESIAN AIRLINES COULD BE SIGNED QUICKLY.

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